

OF  
True Religion,  
HÆRESIE,  
SCHISM,  
TOLERATION,

And what best means may be  
us'd against the growth of

POPERY

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The Author J. M.

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Printed in the Year, 1673.

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**I**T is unknown to no man, who knows  
ought of concernment among us, that  
the increase of Popery is at this day  
no small trouble and offence to great-  
est part of the Nation; and the re-  
joycing of all good men that it is so; the more their  
rejoycing, that God hath given a heart to the peo-  
ple to remember still their great and happy deliver-  
ance from Popish Thraldom, and to esteem so high-  
ly the precious benefit of his Gospel, so sweetly and so  
peaceably enjoy'd among them. Since therefore  
some have already in Publick with many considera-  
ble Arguments exhorted the people to beware the  
growth of this Romish Weed; I thought it no less  
then a common duty to lend my hand, how unable  
soever, to so good a Purpose. I will not now enter  
into the Labyrinth of Counsels and Father, an in-  
tangl'd wood which the Papist loves to fight in, not  
with hope of Victory, but to obscure the shame of  
an open overthrow: which yet in that kind of Com-  
bate, many heretofore, and one of late, hath emi-  
nently given them. And such manner of dispute

with them, to Learned Men, is useful and very commendable: But I shall insist now on what is plainer to Common apprehension, and what I have to say, without longer introduction.

True Religion is the true Worship and Service of God, learnt and believed from the Word of God only. No Man or Angel can know how God would be worshipt and serv'd unless God reveal it: He hath Reveal'd and taught it us in the holy Scriptures by inspir'd Ministers, and in the Gospel by his own Son and his Apostles, with strictest command to reject all other traditions or additions whatsoever. According to that of St. Paul, *Though wee or an Angel from Heaven preach any other Gospel unto you, than that which we have preach't unto you, let him be Anathema, or accurst.* And Deut. 4. 2. *Ie shall not add to the word which I command you, neither shall you diminish ought from it.* Rev. 22. 18, 19. *If any man shall add, &c. If any man shall take away from the words, &c.* With good and Religious Reason therefore all Protestant Churches with one consent, and particularly the Church of England in Her thirty nine Articles, Artic. 6th, 19th, 20th, 21st, and elsewhere, maintain these two points, as the main Principles of true Religion: that the Rule of true Religion is the Word of God only: and that their Faith ought not to be an implicit faith, that is, to believe, though as the Church believes, against or without express authority of Scripture. And if all Protestants as universally as they hold these two Principles, so attentively and Religiously would observe them, they would avoid and cut off many Debates and Contentions, Schisms and Persecutions, which too oft have been among them, and

and more firmly unite against the common adverſary. For hence it directly follows, that no true Proteſtant can persecute, or not tolerate his fellow Proteſtant, though dissenting from him in ſome opinions, but he muſt flatly deny and Renounce theſe two his own main Principles, whereon true Religion is founded; while he compels his Brother from that which he believes as the manifeſt word of God, to an implicit faith (which he himſelf condemns) to the endangering of his Brothers ſoul, whether by rash belief, or outward Conformity: for *whatſoever is not of Faith, is Sin.*

I will now as briefly ſhow what is falſe Religion or Heretie, which will be done as eaſily: for of contraries the definitions muſt needs be contrary. Heretie therefore is a Religion taken up and believ'd from the traditions of men and additions to the word of God. Whence alſo it follows clearly, that of all known Sects or pretended Religions at this day in Chriſtendom, Popery is the only or the greateſt Heretie: and he who is ſo forward to brand all others for Hereticks, the obſtinate Papiſt, the only Heretick. Hence one of their own famous Writers found juſt cauſe to ſtile the Romiſh Church *Mother of Error, School of Heretie*. And whereas the Papiſt boatts himſelf to be a Roman Catholick, it is a meer contradiction, one of the Popes Bulls, as if he ſhould ſay, univerſal particular a Catholic Schismatic. For Catholic in Greek ſignifies univerſal: and the Chriſtian Church was ſo call'd, as conſiſting of all Nations to whom the Goſpel was to be preach'd, in contradinction to the Jewiſh Church, which conſiſted for the moſt part of Jews only.

Sects

Sects may be in true Church as well as in a false, when men follow the Doctrine too much for the Teachers sake, whom they think almost infallible; and this becomes, through Infirmary, implicit Faith; and the name Sectary, pertains to such a Disciple.

Schism is a rent or division in the Church, when it comes to the separating of Congregations; and may also happen to a true Church, as well as to a false; yet in the true needs not tend to the breaking of Communion; if they can agree in the right administration of that wherein they Communicate, keeping their other Opinions to themselves, not being destructive to Faith. The Pharisees and Saducees were two Sects, yet both met together in their common worship of God at Jerusalem. But here the Papist will angrily demand, what! Are Lutherans, Calvinists, Anabaptists, Socinians, Arminians, no Hereticks? I answer, all these may have some errors, but are no Hereticks. Heresie is in the Will and choice profestly against Scripture; error is against the Will, in misunderstanding the Scripture after all sincere endeavours to understand it rightly: Hence it was said well by one of the Ancients, *Err I may, but a Heretick I will not be.* It is a humane frailty to err, and no man is infallible here on earth. But so long as all these profess to set the Word of God only before them as the Rule of faith and obedience; and use all diligence and sincerity of heart, by reading, by learning, by study, by prayer for Illumination of the holy Spirit, to understand the Rule and obey it, they have done what man can do: God will assuredly pardon them, as he did the friends of



of *Jab*, good and pious men, though much mistaken, as there it appears, in some Points of Doctrine. But some will say, with Christians it is otherwise, whom God hath promis'd by his Spirit to teach all things. True, all things absolutely necessary to salvation: But the hottest disputes among Protestants calmly and charitably enquir'd into, will be found less then such. The Lutheran holds Consubstantiation; an error indeed, but not mortal. The Calvinist is taxt with Predestination, and to make God the Author of sin; nor with any dishonourable thought of God, but it may be overzealously asserting his absolute power, not without plea of Scripture. The Anabaptist is accus'd of Denying Infants their right to Baptism; again they say, they deny nothing but what the Scripture denies them. The Arian and Socinian are charg'd to dispute against the Trinity: they affirm to believe the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, according to Scripture, and the Apostolic Creed; as for terms of Trinity, Trinitunity, Co-essentiality, Tripersonality, and the like, they reject them as Scholastic Notions, not to be found in Scripture, which by a general Protestant Maxim is plain and perspicuous abundantly to explain its own meaning in the properest words, belonging to so high a Matter and so necessary to be known; a mystery indeed in their Sophistic Subtilties, but in Scripture a plain Doctrine. Their other Opinions are of less Moment. They dispute the satisfaction of Christ, or rather the word *satisfaction*, as not Scriptural: but they acknowledge him both God and their Saviour. The *Arminian* lastly is condemn'd for fet-

ring up free will against free grace; but that Impu-  
 tation he disclaims in all his writings, and grounds  
 himself largely upon Scripture only. It cannot be  
 deny'd that the Authors or late Revivers of all these  
 Sects or Opinions, were Learned, Worthy, Zea-  
 lous, and Religious Men, as appears by their lives  
 written; and the same of their many Eminent  
 and Learned followers, perfect and powerful in the  
 Scriptures, holy and unblameable in their lives; and  
 it cannot be imagin'd that God would desert such  
 painful and zealous labourers in his Church, and oft-  
 times great sufferers for their Conscience, to damna-  
 ble Errors & a Reprobate sense, who had so often im-  
 plor'd the assistance of his Spirit; but rather, having  
 made no man Infallible, that he hath pardon'd their  
 errors, and accepts their Pious endeavours, sincerely  
 searching all things according to the rule of Scripture,  
 with such guidance and direction as they can obtain  
 of God by Prayer. What Protestant then who him-  
 self maintains the same Principles, and disavows  
 all implicit Faith, would persecute, and not rather  
 charitably tolerate such men as these, unless he  
 mean to abjure the Principles of his own Religion?  
 If it be ask'd how far they should be tolerated? I  
 answer doubtless equally, as being all Protestants;  
 that is on all occasions to give account of their Faith,  
 either by Arguing, Preaching in their several Assem-  
 blies, Publick writing, and the freedom of Printing.  
 For if the French and Polonian Protestants enjoy all  
 this liberty among Papists, much more may a Pro-  
 testant justly expect it among Protestants; and yet  
 sometimes here among us, the one persecutes the  
 other upon every slight Pretence.



But he is wont to say he enjoyns only things indifferent. Let them be so still, who gave him authority to change their nature by injoyning them? If by his own Principles, as is prov'd, he ought to tolerate controverted points of Doctrine, not slightly-grounded on Scripture, much more ought he not impose things indifferent without Scripture. In Religion nothing is indifferent, but, if it come once to be Impos'd, is either a command or a Prohibition, and so consequently an addition to the word of God; which he professes to disallow. Besides, how unequal, how uncharitable must it needs be, to Impose that which his conscience cannot urge him to impose, upon him whose conscience forbids him to obey? What can it be but love of contention for things not necessary to be done, to molest the conscience of his Brother, who holds them necessary to be not done? To conclude, let such a one but call to mind his own Principles above mention'd, and he must necessarily grant, that neither he can impose, nor the other believe or obey ought in Religion, but from the Word of God only. More amply to understand this, may be read the 14th. and 15th. Chapters to the Romans, and the Contents of the 14th, set forth no doubt but with full authority of the Church of England, the Gloss is this. *Men may not condemn, or condemn one the other for things indifferent.* And in the 6th Article above mentioned, *whatsoever is not read in Holy Scripture, nor may be proved thereby, is not to be required of any man as an article of Faith, or necessary to salvation.* And certainly what is not so, is not to be required at all; as being an addition to the Word of God expressly forbidden.

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Thus

Thus this long and hot Contest, whether Protestants ought to tolerate one another, if men will be but Rational and not Partial, may be ended without need of more words to compose it.

Let us now enquire whether Popery be tolerable or no. Popery is a double thing to deal with, and claims a twofold Power, Ecclesiastical, and Political, both usurp, and the one supporting the other.

But Ecclesiastical is ever pretended to Political. The Pope by this mixt faculty, pretends right to Kingdoms and States, and especially to this of *England*, Thrones and Unthrones Kings, and absolves the people from their obedience to them; sometimes interdicts to whole Nations the Publick worship of God, shutting up their Churches: and was wont to dreign away greatest part of the wealth of this then miserable Land, as part of his Patrimony, to maintain the Pride and Luxury of his Court and Prelates: and now since, through the infinite mercy and favour of God, we have shaken off his *Babylonish* Yoke, hath not ceased by his Spyes and Agents, Bulls and Emiffaries, once to destroy both King and Parliament; perpetually to seduce, corrupt, and pervert as many as they can of the People. Whether therefore it be fit or reasonable, to tolerate men thus principld in Religion towards the State, I submit it to the consideration of all Magistrates, who are best able to provide for their own and the publick safety. As for tolerating the exercise of their Religion, supposing their State activities not to be dangerous, I answer, that Toleration is either public or private, and the exercise of their Religion, as far as it is idolatrous, can be tolerated neither way:

not

not publicly, without grievous and unsufferable scandal giv'n to all conscientious Beholders; not privately, without great offence to God, declar'd against all kind of Idolatry, though secret. *Ezekiel 8. 7, 8.* And he brought me to the door of the Court, and when I looked, behold a hole in the wall. Then said he unto me, Son of Man, digg now in the wall; and when I had digged, behold a Door, and he said unto me, go in, and behold the wicked Abominations that they do here. And verse 12. Then said he unto me, Son of Man, hast thou seen what the Abominations of the house of Israel do in the dark? &c. And it appears by the whole Chapter, that God was no less offended with these secret Idolatries, then with those in public; and no less provokt, then to bring on and hasten his Judgements on the whole Land for these also.

Having shown thus, that Popery, as being Idolatrous, is not to be tolerated either in Public or in Private; it must be now thought how to remove it and hinder the growth thereof, I mean in our Natives, and not Foreigners, Privileg'd by the Law of Nations. Are we to punish them by corporal punishment, or fines in their Estates, upon account of their Religion? I suppose it stands not with the Clemency of the Gospel, more then what appertains to the security of the State: But first we must remove their Idolatry, and all the furniture thereof, whether Idols, or the Mass wherein they adore their God under Bread and Wine: for the Commandment forbids to adore, not only any Graven Image, but the likeness of any thing in Heaven above, or in the Earth beneath, or in the water under the Earth, thou shalt not bow down to them nor worship them, for I the Lord thy God

*an a Jealous God.* If they say that by removing their Idols we violate their Consciences, we have no warrant to regard Conscience which is not grounded on Scripture: and they themselves confess in their late defences, that they hold not their Images necessary to salvation, but only as they are enjoyn'd them by tradition.

Shall we condescend to dispute with them. The Scripture is our only Principle in Religion: and by that only they will not be Judg'd, but will add other Principles of their own, which, forbidden by the Word of God, we cannot assent to. And the common Maxim also in Logic is, *against them who deny Principles, we are not to dispute* nor them bound their disputations on the Scripture only, and an ordinary Protestant, well read in the Bible, may turn and wind their Doctors. They will not go about to prove their Idolatries by the Word of God, but run to shifts and evasions, and frivolous distinctions: Idols they say are *Laymens Books*, and a great means to stir up pious thoughts and Devotion in the Learnedst. I say they are no means of Gods appointing, but plainly the contrary: Let them hear the Prophets; Jerem. 10. 8. *The stock is a Doctrine of Vanities.* Habakkuk 2. 18. *what profiteth the graven Image that the maker thereof hath graven it: The Molten Image and a teacher of Lyes?* But they alleadge in their late answers, that the Laws of Moses giv'n only to the Jews, concern not us under the Gospel, and remember not that Idolatry is forbidden as expressly, [in several places of the Gospel,] But with these wiles and fallacies compassing Sea and Land, like the Pharisees of old, to make

one Profelite, they lead away privily many simple and ignorant Souls, men or women, and make them twofold more the Children of Hell then themselves, Martin burz. But the Apostle hath well warn'd us, it may say, from such Deceivers as these, for their Mystery was then working. I beseech you Brethren, saith he, mark them which cause divisions and offences, contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned, and avoid them; for they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly, and by good words and fair speeches deceive the heart of the simple, Rom. 16. 17. 18. & c.

The next means to hinder the growth of Popery will be to read duly and diligently the Holy Scriptures, which as St. Paul saith to Timothy, who hath known them from a child, are able to make wise unto salvation. And to the whole Church of Colosse, Let the word of Christ dwell in you plentifully, with all wisdom, Coloss. 3. 16. The Papal Antichristian Church permits nor her Laity to read the Bible in their own tongue: Our Church on the contrary hath propos'd it to all men, and to this end translated it into English, with profitable Notes on what is met with obscure, though what is most necessary to be known be still plainest: that all sorts and degrees of men, not understanding the Original, may read it in their Mother Tongue. Neither let the Countryman, the Tradesman, the Lawyer, the Physician, the Statesman, excuse himself by his much business from the studious reading thereof. Our Saviour saith, Luke 10. 41, 42. Thou art careful and troubled about many things, but one thing is needful. If they were ask'd, they would be loath to for earthly things, wealth,

or honour before the wisdom of salvation. Yet most men in the course and practice of their lives are found to do so, and through unwillingness to take the pains of understanding their Religion by their own diligent study, would fain be saved by a Deputy. Hence comes in their faith, ever learning and never taught; much hearing and small proficience, still want of Fundamental knowledg easily turns to superstition or Popery: Therefore the Apostle admonishes, Eccles. 4. 12. *That we henceforth be no more children tossed to and fro and carryed about with every wind of Doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness whereby they lye in wait to deceive.* Every member of the Church, at least of any breeding or capacity, so well ought to be grounded in spiritual knowledg, as, if need be, to examine their Teachers themselves, Acts. 17. 11. *They searched the Scriptures daily, whether those things were so.* Rev. 2. 2. *Thou hast tryed them which say they are Apostles, and are not.* How should any private Christian try his Teachers unless he be well grounded himself in the Rule of Scripture, by which he is taught. As therefore among Papists, their ignorance in Scripture chiefly upholds Popery; so among Protestant People, the frequent and serious reading thereof will soonest pull Popery down.

Another means to abate Popery arises from the constant reading of Scripture, wherein Believers who agree in the main, are every where exhorted to mutual forbearance and charity one towards the other, though dissenting in some opinions. It is written that the Court of our Saviour was without seame: whence some would infer that there should be no division



division in the Church of Christ. It should be so indeed; Yet seams in the same cloth, neither hurt the garment, nor misbecome it; and not only seams, but Schisms will be while men are fallible. But if they who dissent in matters not essential to belief, while the common adversary is in the field, shall stand jarring and pelting at one another, they will be soon routed and subdued. The Papist with open mouth makes much advantage of our several opinions, nor that he is able to confute the worst of them, but that we by our continual jangle among our selves make them worse then they are indeed. To save our selves therefore, and resist the common enemy, it concerns us mainly to agree within our selves, that with joyned forces we may not only hold our own, but get ground; and why should we not? The Gospel commands us to tolerate one another, though of various opinions, and hath promised a good and happy event thereof, *Phil. 3. 15. Let us therefore as many as be perfect be thus minded; and if in any thing ye be otherwise minded, God shall reveal even that unto you. And we are bid, 1 Thess. 5. 21. Prove all things, hold fast that which is good.* St. Paul judg'd that not only to tolerate, but to examine and prove all things, was no danger to our holding fast of that which is good. How shall we prove all things, which includes all opinions at least founded on Scripture, unless we not only tolerate them, but patiently hear them, and seriously read them? If he who thinks himself in the truth professes to have learnt it, not by implicite faith, but by attentive study of the Scriptures & full persuasion of heart, with what equity can he refuse to hear or read him, who demonstrates to have gained his knowledge by the same way? is it a fair course to assert truth by arrogating to himself the only freedom of speech, and stopping the mouths

mouths of others equally gifted? This is the direct way to bring in that  
 Capital Simplician, which we abhor. They pretend to be  
 useful, the weaker for the same groundless fear, pretended by the  
 Romish Clergy in prohibiting the Scripture. At least then let them have  
 leave to write in Latin, which the common people understand not; that  
 what they hold may be difficult among the learned only. We suffer the  
 idolatrous books of Papists without this fear to be sold & read as common  
 as our own. Why not much rather of Anabaptists, Arminians, &  
 Builders? These are sold and read with contentment both much pro-  
 fessed by reading Controversies, but Seneca wisely his Judgement sharpened,  
 and the truth which he holds more firmly establish'd. If then it be  
 possible for him to read, why should it not at least be tolerable and  
 use for him to advertise write? In fact, the necessity that contraries  
 laid together more evidently appear: it follows then that all contro-  
 versies being permitted, falsehood will appear more false, and truth the  
 more true. With much reason, thus much, as only to the good con-  
 dition of Popery, viz. to the general confirmation of unimpeach'd truth.  
 The last means to avoid Popery, is to amend our lives: it is a gen-  
 eral complaint that this Nation of late years, is grown more numerous  
 and as civilly worse than his forefathers. Pride, Luxury, Drunkenness,  
 Whoredom, Cursing, Swearing, bold and open Atheism every where  
 abounding: Where these grow, no wonder if Popery also grow apace.  
 Therefore, if we be wicked, but as I think his virtuous, yet some  
 him with thoughts of another world, & the Revil of his soul he trouble  
 and melancholy which he conceives of true Repentance and amend-  
 ment he doubts not; but chooses rather to some casual Superstition,  
 which may pacify and lull his Conscience with some more pleasing  
 Doctrine. None more ready and officious to offer her self then the  
 Romish, and open wide her Office, with all her faculties to receive him,  
 easy Confession, easy Absolution, Pardon, Indulgences, Masses for him  
 both quick and dead. *Stas Deo, Deliquit, and he lies:* and he in-  
 stead of *working out his salvation with fear and trembling*, first thinks in  
 his heart (like another kind of fool then he in the Pastures) to bribe  
 God as a corrupt Judge, and by his Proctor, some Priest or Fryer, to  
 buy out his Peace with money, which he cannot with his repentance.  
 For God, when men sin outrageously, and will not be admonish'd, gives  
 over chastizing them, perhaps by Verberation, Bare Sword, or Flogging,  
 which may all turn to a good use, so that he will first punish, and then  
 chastise, before he will of heart and holiness, to their final perdition.  
 Idolatry brought the Heathen to heinous Transgressions, *Romans 23.*  
 And heinous Transgressions oft times bring the first professors of the  
 Religion, to gross Idolatry. *1 Thess. 1, 2, 3. For this cause, O that*  
*God send thee strong delusion, that thou should believe lies: that thy eyes might be*  
*dimmed, and thou believe not the truth, but had abundance in unrighteousness.* And  
*1 Thess. 2, 12.* Speaking of idolaters, *They have not known nor understood*  
*the way that leads to life, but they have been made to follow the vain*  
*and idle traditions of men.* Let us therefore using all law means, let us con-  
 sider, but first to be done, amend our lives with all speed; least through im-  
 penitency we run into that rapidly, which we now seek all means so wa-  
 rily to avoid, the worst of superstitions, and the heaviest of all Gods  
 Judgements, Popery.

